

# Supporting Expressive Language

Expressive language is the ability to use words and then combine them into sentences, to ask questions, to tell people what we want and to tell stories.

## Strategies

- Give your child examples of appropriate sentences e.g. "We are going to the park today"
- Expand what they say by adding a word or two e.g. if they say "car" the adult can say "Yes, Mum's driving the car"
- Give them time to respond and structure their ideas
- Trying to remember what has happened and talking about it can be difficult. Allow them to use gesture, objects, pictures or photographs to help support their communication.
- Ask them questions (e.g. "who", "where", "when" and "what") to help them expand what they have said. You can then model how to join these elements together. For example, if your child is talking about what they did at school they might say "sandcastle fell down". You can use questions to find out more and show your child how to join these elements e.g. "Who knocked over your sandcastle?" Child: "Thomas". Adult: "Oh, Thomas knocked over your sandcastle"
- Talk about what you are doing as you do it e.g. "Sam is rolling the ball"
- Reduce other distractions - turn off the TV/radio/i Pad/phone

## Games/activities

**Silly Stories-** Get out a collection of objects or pictures. Lay these out on the table. The adult can start the story off, for example "One day there was a dinosaur who lived in a shoe". The next person picks an object or picture and tells the next sentence of the story using this item.

**Sharing a book-** Look through books together, you don't always have to read the words. Use the pictures to make up your own sentences/stories. If a story is familiar your child might be able to tell you the story by using the pictures.

**Role play** - A familiar story can be used as the base of the story. Act out parts of the story e.g. "The Ginger Bread Man". Puppets can also be made and used to retell familiar stories.

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**Picture description** - Get a collection of pictures of people doing different things, show your child how to describe the pictures using 'subject - verb - object' (person - action - object) sentence structure, for example, "the boy is washing his hands" or "the lady is reading a book". See if your child can form similar sentences for different pictures.

Apps to try -

Actions in Video (Geraldine Morgan)

Widget Symbol Sentences (Widget)

Basic Sequences (ColourCards)

Verbs (I can do apps)

Useful websites-

[www.ican.org.uk](http://www.ican.org.uk)

[www.talkingpoint.org.uk](http://www.talkingpoint.org.uk)

[www.twinkl.co.uk](http://www.twinkl.co.uk)

[www.languageforlearning.co.uk](http://www.languageforlearning.co.uk)